



York and Scarborough
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Paediatric hearing Assessment through ENT review

Information for patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, please contact:

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Why am I being given this information?

You and your child have been seen in the Ear Nose and Throat (ENT) clinic today. It has been suggested that your child would benefit from having a paediatric hearing assessment to determine the best management option. To assist in your decision-making, and obtain a better understanding of the test results, we have put some information together for you.

What is conductive hearing loss?

A conductive hearing loss can occur when sound is unable to pass through the outer and middle ear to the cochlea (inner ear) and auditory (hearing) nerve. The most common cause of conductive hearing loss in childhood is glue ear (fluid in the middle ear). This is usually a temporary condition. Glue ear (also known as otitis media with effusion) affects about one in five pre-school children. For most children, glue ear clears up by itself and does not need any treatment.

What happens after the tests?

Once the audiologist has tested your child's hearing, they may be seen in the ENT clinic. The ENT doctor will discuss the results and best possible management options. If your child has a conductive hearing loss, such as glue ear, the ENT doctor will advise you whether grommets can be considered, this will be a discussion between you and the ENT doctor.

What are the management options?

Option 1 – Grommets: These are tiny plastic tubes that are placed in the eardrum during a short operation under general anaesthetic. They are inserted after the middle ear fluid has been drained away. The grommets allow air to circulate in the middle ear and stop more fluid from building up. They usually stay in until the eardrum has healed and pushes them out.

Further information can be obtained via the NDCS booklet, “Harvey Gets Grommets”.

Image taken from
www.ndcs.org.uk.
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<https://ndcs-bookshop.myshopify.com/products/harvey-gets-grommets> [checked November 2025]

Option 2 - Hearing aid trial: If you decide that you do not want a surgical option such as grommets or one is not offered, you may be offered an appointment with a paediatric audiologist. They may want to retest your child and determine whether a hearing aid is suitable.

The type of hearing aid that will be suitable for your child will depend on the type and level of hearing loss. Behind-the-ear (BTE) hearing aids work by amplifying (making louder) sounds going into the ear and are programmed to match your child's hearing loss. The audiologist will inform you of the results and explain if hearing aids are appropriate.

Hearing aids need to be coupled to the ear. In older children and adults, we might use a discrete slim tube. In younger children, we use an ear mould which is made from an impression of the ear(s) made using a small amount of putty-like material that is inserted in your child's ear. This impression is sent to a factory to be made, and a follow-up appointment will be made to have the hearing aid fitted.

Option 3 - Watchful waiting: The audiologist may not feel that your child would benefit from a hearing aid at this stage and may advise communication tactics and will likely offer a follow-up appointment at an agreed time-frame (usually three months) to see if there has been any change in your child's hearing. At any stage in this process, depending on the hearing levels, a hearing aid(s) might be offered.

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact:

Audiology Department, York Hospital, Wigginton Road,
York, YO31 8HE, telephone 01904 726741

or email yhs-tr.HearingAid.Repairs@nhs.net.

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net.

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website:

www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/

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